

UNITED STATES : Alabama Power to buy electricity from the Coosa Pines pulp plant

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Alabama Power signed a five year contract with AbiBow U.S. Inc. under which Alabama Power will buy electricity from a generating facility at the Coosa Pines pulp plant. The contract will provide 15 megawatts of generating capacity, enough power for an estimated 3,750 homes.

The power will be generated using fuel from black tar, a by-product of the pulp making process. Electricity generated at the plant is classified as renewable energy, according to the Alabama Public Service Commission.

AbiBow will be utilizing their biomass from its wood milling operations and producing renewable energy. AbiBow will then provide this renewable energy to Alabama Power, said Alyson Fuqua, Alabama Power Company spokeswoman. Alabama Power has entered a partnership like this before with Westervelt Lumber in Moundville, she said.

According to her, the contract shows Alabama Power's continued commitment to secure cost effective ways to produce renewable energy. According to Alabama Public Service Commissioner Terry Dunn, he is hopeful the contract will strengthen the job security of workers at AbiBow. He said, This contract is good for Alabama Power's customers and should also provide more financial stability for the AbiBow mill. Anything we can do that protects jobs and helps our economy, provided it is also good for customers, is the right policy.

When considering the contract, they looked at all costs and made sure that Alabama Power purchasing renewable fuel from AbiBow was indeed a cost effective solution, said David Rountree, chief of staff for Dunn. He said, Having Alabama Power buy that electricity is a source of revenue for AbiBow.

The economy is really hurting and as a source of possible business this contract will contribute to AbiBow's financial health. We have all dealt with a lot of bad news and it is common sense to reach a profitable deal to sell power. It makes them more stable financially and reinforces the job security of the people working there, he added.

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